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GEOGRAPHICAL LITERATURE AND MAPS

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BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Die Polarforschung, ihre Ziele und Ergebnisse. Von Eugen Oberhummer. 53 pp. Vorträge des Ver. zur Verbreitung naturwissens. Kenntnisse in Wien, Vol. 48, Heft 17, Wien, 1908.

A lecture by the Professor of Geography in the University of Vienna, giving a summary of polar endeavor, its purposes and results. Dr. Oberhummer, writing before the attainment of the North Pole, said he had no doubt that this event was approaching; and when the Pole was reached, the value of the achievement would not appear very important and systematic and scientific exploration would again take the foreground.

The United States, with Excursions to Mexico, Cuba, Porto Rico and Alaska. Handbook for Travellers by Karl Baedeker. Fourth Revised Edition. cii and 724 pp., 33 Maps, 48 Plans and Index. Karl Baedeker, Leipzig; Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1909. M. 15.

It was a peculiarly difficult task to write a first rate guide book of a country so vast and so rapidly changing as the United States. From the first, however, Baedeker's United States was a great success and the succeeding editions have kept it up to date. The effort to make this book comparable with those in the same series on the countries of Europe was an arduous task and the publisher is to be congratulated on the success attained. The work appeals not only to the foreign but also to the American traveller and in the present edition more emphasis is given, than in the earlier issues, to many places that are interesting from their association with American history and literature. Praises for Baedeker are much like commendation of the alphabet but it may, at least, be said that we have no publication in our country that fills the place of this Handbook; and we shall be glad if, in a generation or two, we may be able to fill any American book in the general trade, with such superior and efficient maps as are to be found in this volume.

Geographisches Handbuch. Allgemeine Erdkunde, Länderkunde und Wirtschaftsgeographie. Unter Mitarbeit hervorragender Fachmänner, herausgegeben von Albert Scobel. Fünfte neubearbeitete und vermehrte Auflage. In zwei Bänden. Erster Band—Allgemeine Erdkunde, Länder- und Staatenkunde von Europa. xvi and 957 pp., 522 Illustrations and maps in

the text, 7 black and 5 colored plates and a colored map; Zweiter Band—Länder und Staatenkunde der aussereuropäischen Gebiete. Wirtschaftsgeographie. xiv and 816 pp., 204 Illustrations and Maps in text, 7 black and 7 colored Plates, Bibliography and Index. Velhagen & Klasing, Leipzig, 1909. M. 20.

Every issue of this standard Handbook has been awaited with interest, because, on the whole, it is the best work of the sort that is published. The five editions form, in themselves, a good summary of geography. The present issue is the first in two volumes and contains fully three times as much matter as any of the earlier editions. The editor had the collaboration of fifteen of the leading geographers of Germany, all men of international reputation, as Penck, Krümmel, Drude Meinardus, Rein and Sapper. This work, appearing every few years, with its hundreds of maps and diagrams and its authoritative letterpress, keeps nearly every phase of geography up to date, dealing not only with the descriptive side of the study but also with most other geographical aspects. It is perhaps noteworthy, and a little curious, that Prof. Scobel, the able editor of all the issues of this work and the Director of the map house of Velhagen & Klasing, does not provide an occasional article on cartography.

The work especially appeals to teachers, students, merchants and intelligent persons, who read German, as a guide and reference book in geography.

Miguel Triana. Por el sur de Colombia. Excursión pintoresca y científica al Putumayo. Prológo de S. Pérez Triana. xxiii and 355 pp., Map and Index. Garnier Hermanos, Paris (1908).

The author is a Colombian civil engineer, who went inland from Tumaco, one of the Pacific ports of Colombia, to search for routes that might be made practicable wagon roads between the highlands of the Andes, at Pasto, and navigable tributaries of the Amazon. A little steamer took him as far inland as Barbacoas on the Telembi R. His journey thence was along the wretched path which laden mules have travelled, for generations, to Pasto. His real work began at this point, whence a short journey to the southeast took him to La Cocha, a large lake, 9,000 feet above the sea, from which issues the Guaimés branch of the Putumayo tributary of the Amazon.

He descended this branch, to its junction with the Putumayo, making the journey in a canoe, in spite of rapids and other obstructions. The Putumayo itself is very well known, for the present President of Colombia descended it in 1874, about 1,000 miles, to its mouth; and Dr. Crevaux in 1878-9, ascended the river for 800 miles to Cuemby, in a steamer, and reported it navigable to that point for vessels drawing 6 feet. It is believed to be better adapted for navigation than most of the Amazon tributaries.

Having reached this known river, the explorer turned north and ascended the Guineo affluent of the Putumayo and then crossing a divide, paddled up the Mocoa affluent of the Caquetá or Yapura, another of the great Amazon tributaries. He thus examined three water approaches to great rivers leading to the Amazon. He seems to have proven that it will be a difficult and very expensive undertaking to connect this part of the Andean plateau with good navigation leading to the Amazon. His book is delightful reading, for it is not merely a scientific record but graphically describes a very little known part of southern Colombia.